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11 March 1953

London Prior to the announcement of a new government the British

Foreign Office considered that:

(1) Stalin's death would shake the government and the people and that possibilities of tensions within the Kremlin were probably great.

(2) That the present and immediate future are a time for the greatest caution on the part of the West. Death of Stalin may arouse wave of patriotism which would react against any provocation. Dangers of miscalculation are at present greater on both sides due to unpredictable policies of new leadership.

(3) Foreign Office stated that Churchill would undoubtedly be "itching" for a meeting between USSR and Western leaders and that it might be well to offer advantageous possibilities for such talks.

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